



Sedgwick County

SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bev Baalman
Media Liaison
(316) 681-1185

2001

Members

School Brings Stress for Kids

Charles Magruder, M.D.
Chair

Kevin Bomhoff

Harold Casey

Randy Class

Deborah Donaldson

Ivonne Goldstein

Liz McGinness

Terry Miller

Rose Mary Mohr, Ph.D.

Terri Moses

Mary Navarro

Toni Pickard, Ph.D.

Sheldon Preskorn, M.D.

Gary Steed

Elise Steelberg, M.D.

John Sullivan

Doug Winkley

As school gets back into full swing, kids may find themselves overly stressed as they adjust to their new environment, classroom schedules, and being socially accepted by their peers. Parents need to be sensitive to the new transitions; for example, youth going from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school. Kids may need help adjusting to homework demands, involvement in extracurricular activities and new relationships with teachers and peers.

Liz McGinness, Suicide Prevention Task Force member and Assistant Director of Special Education in the Wichita Public Schools, suggests talking frequently with your child, and to 'listen, listen, listen' to their concerns. Reassure them with your love and support. Suggest ways to deal with stress such as talking about problems, and taking good care of themselves with a healthy diet and getting regular exercise. Encourage children to express opinions, suggestions, and solutions. Keep in touch with his/her school and look for these signs of stress:

- changes in behavior
- changes in eating and sleep habits
- mood swings
- overwhelming feelings of sadness
- making negative comments about self
- withdrawn or isolated from friends and family
- loss of interest in usual activities

If your child shows any of these signs, help them get help by talking to a counselor, family doctor, health care worker or calling an organization for assistance. Help is available by calling Crisis Intervention Services at 263-3770, (crisis intervention, suicide prevention and mental health emergency services), Teen Heartline at 683-7777 (phone referral service for counseling and support) or the Self Help Network of Kansas at 978-3843 (information and referrals).

- end -

"Sedgwick County - Strengthening Lifelines"